



Common Questions about ISTEP+

What is ISTEP+?

- The Indiana Statewide Testing for Education Progress-Plus (or ISTEP+) measures what students know and are able to do at each grade level in core academic subjects.
- Based on Indiana's Academic Standards, ISTEP+ provides a learning check-up designed to make sure students are on track and to signal whether they need extra help.

When is ISTEP+?

- For the 2008-2009 school year only, students will take ISTEP+ both in the fall and the spring. After this year, the test will be taken only in the spring.
- The spring tests will be given in two parts. Part one, which includes essay and short answer questions, will be given from March 2-11. Part two, which includes multiple choice questions, will be given from April 27 to May 6. Check with your school for local test dates within this window.

What's on the ISTEP+?

Based on Indiana's Academic Standards, the spring ISTEP+ covers:

- English/language arts in grades 3-8
- Mathematics in grades 3-8
- Science in grades 4 and 6
- Social studies in grades 5 and 7

When should I expect to receive the results?

- The results for the spring 2009 ISTEP+ will be released in August.
- Results for each year thereafter will be available to students, parents and educators before the end of the school year.

How can students get ready for ISTEP+?

- **Be prepared.** Cramming for any test is never the best way to prepare. Keep up with your homework and ask your teachers for help when you need it.
- **Ask for help.** If you've had trouble with ISTEP+ in the past, ask a teacher, counselor or parent about extra help now.
- **Review.** In the weeks before your test, take it seriously when your teachers review important information.
- **Get plenty of sleep.** Go to bed a little earlier so you get a good night's sleep. Being well rested will give you an extra boost of energy for test day.
- **Have a good breakfast.** Eat protein (eggs, meat, cheese, etc.), which will help you perform better than a sugary doughnut. Too much food can make you feel sleepy, so don't overdo it.
- **Take a break.** Get some exercise during your breaks or after school to keep your energy up.
- **Double-check your work.** Get in the habit now of double-checking your work and proofreading your answers on homework to be ready to find mistakes on test days.

What can parents do to help students prepare for ISTEP+?

- **Stay connected.** Cramming for a test rarely results in the type of learning that will stay with your child throughout his or her life. The best preparation is to provide consistent support for your child throughout his or her education.
- **Know what's expected.** Read Indiana's Academic Standards (www.doe.in.gov/standards) so you know what your child should know and be able to do, reinforce these expectations at home and stay connected to your child's academic performance throughout the year.
- **Check grades.** Your son or daughter may say things are "fine" at school but don't stop checking report cards, progress reports or, if available, your child's online grades or class progress.
- **Talk to the teacher.** Teachers know how hard students are working, how well they are behaving, quality of their homework and what areas need improvement. Collect e-mail addresses or phone numbers of all your child's teachers and check in periodically.
- **Don't buckle on homework.** If your child is not studying at home, ask why, and double-check with teachers. It's tough to hold the line, but making sure your child does his or her homework is important for academic success.
- **Ask for help.** Students who are struggling in a particular class may need extra help after school or with a tutor. Find out from your school where you can go for help and make sure your student gets the help he or she needs. Catching a problem area now can make a big difference.
- **Go to parent meetings.** Most schools offer parent nights or teacher/parent sessions that provide great information. Check your school's calendar at the beginning of the year and plan to attend.
- **Get involved.** Nothing will have a bigger impact on your student's success than your involvement in his or her education.

What if students don't pass?

- Students who do not pass ISTEP+ are entitled to extra help and instructional time to address any areas of need.
- Ask your teacher and guidance counselors about extra help in areas that students didn't pass.

What if students have special needs?

- Several testing accommodations are available for students with disabilities or limited English proficiency, such as additional time and changes in test scheduling, format and setting.
- Talk to your parents and guidance counselors about the specific accommodations in your Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Plan or Individual Learning Program (ILP).

What if I have more questions about ISTEP+?

- Talk to teachers and counselors at your school.
- Visit www.doe.in.gov/istep or call 1-888-54-ISTEP.
- Visit www.learnmoreindiana.org or call 1-800-992-2076.